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The Washington Post
The New York Times
The Washington Times
The Wall Street Journal
The Christian Science Monitor 6
New York Daily News
USA Today
The Chicago Tribune

Date 21 Oct 1988

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Reagan-Bush '80 arms deal with Iran charged

Charges, detailed in The Nation, In These Times, and Playboy magazine, assert that the 1980 Reagan-Bush campaign convinced the Ayatollah Khomeini's regime to delay the release of 52 American hostages until after President Carter was out of office. The GOP feared a pre-election release of the hostages – an "October surprise" – would help the Democrats win.

In return, Reagan-Bush officials allegedly offered cash payments and a promise to resume military spare-parts shipments once Reagan took office. And George Bush allegedly took part in secret negotiations with Iranian amissaries in Paris on Oct. 19, 1980.

A Bush spokesman has called the allegations "a complete fabrication." And Secret Service records show Bush was in Washington on that date. But the charges persist, generating considerable talk-show activity, a film titled "Coverup," and demonstrations in front of Bush campaign offices.

Evidence used to support the allegations includes the July 1981, crash on the Soviet-Turkish border of an Argentine plane, flying from Israel to Iran, with American-made military spare parts. Washington Post sources asserted in 1986 that then-Secretary of State Alexander Haig, Jr. approved the Israeli shipment.

The $10 million to $15 million in equipment was sent at a time when no Americans were held hostage. The Nation asserts that the cargo may have been payment for the pre-election deal. Also, a former CIA pilot, who is charged with bank fraud, says he flew then-CIA director William Casey to Paris and saw Bush there on Oct. 19,1980.

These allegations are also made by former Iranian President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr and former Justice Department analyst Barbara Honegger.

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